

ABSTRACT

A method and composition for sterilizing articles that are contaminated with infectious prion protein, such as surgical instruments, kitchen utensils, laboratory tools, etc., comprising the steps of: (a) heating the articles to be treated at a moderate temperature well below the incineration temperature of said infectious prion protein, wherein said moderate temperature is sufficient to enhance the proteolytic susceptibility of infective prion protein associated with said articles; and (b) exposing the heated articles to a proteolytic enzyme that is effective for at least partial reduction of the infective protein prion associated with said articles under said moderate temperature.